1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

There is no cultivation of standing crops. Weeding is done by hand, usually by the women and children. The fields are sometimes fenced with posts and saplings bound crosswise with withes, somewhat like our own post and rail fences, but this seems to be rare. It is only resorted to in places where the wild pigs are numerous.

When the grain begins to ripen, members of the family are on guard day and night to drive away birds and wild pigs, whose nocturnal raids often cause serious damage. Cords with bits of cloth or leaves attached are sometimes suspended over the fields, but there seem to be no elaborate scarecrows comparable to those of Malaysia. Bamboo bull-roarers are often used to frighten away the birds, but this task is usually delegated to small boys armed with slings. They are very expert with these weapons and I have seen a boy bring down a bird no larger than a sparrow at twenty yards. At night the men keep guard with spears, to drive off pigs. Also, traps are set in their runs and at gaps in the fence.

The Menabe, like the Ikongo, sacrifice before beginning the harvest, but their method is slightly different. A post, called *fatotra*, is set up in the *tavy* of each family. It is about 4 feet high and 2 or 3 inches in diameter (Fig. 23, k). The top is split in the form of a cross and little wedges inserted with their ends projecting almost horizontally, forming a small stand or platform about 6 inches across. The husband, not the wife, gathers the green rice and makes the *lango*. He places a little of it, on a piece of the leaf of the Traveler's Palm, on the *fatotra* and says: "Oh *Fahasivy* [ancestors], you have given us a good harvest. We give you this meal as your share." The neighboring Betsimisaraka make their harvest sacrifice in the same way, but mix rice chaff with the *lango*.

After the sacrifice has been made, the harvest commences. The rice is headed with small iron knives identical with those used in weaving, as razors, etc. (Fig. 1, f). The stalks are cut between the knife blade and the thumb, two or three at a time, and the heads dropped into a basket held in the left hand. The heads are often dried on mats in the sun before they are stored. No use is made of the straw, which is left to rot in the fields.

The granaries, *homby*, are small houses, shaped like miniature dwellings. The walls and floor are of split and interwoven bamboo and the roof heavily thatched with the leaves of the Traveler's Palm. They are always raised on smooth posts, to keep out the rats, but the height varies greatly. The average is about 6 feet, but some are as low as 4 feet, and others as high as 12 feet. There is a small door

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

231 [262] for herding or driving cattle and the natives seemed much surprised at the idea. They are not eaten and the idea is considered disgusting, although there is no definite taboo on it. There seemed to be no dogs in many villages and their economic importance is slight.

Cattle are all of the humped or zebu variety, with moderately long sideward curving horns. The size of the hump varies with the animal's age and condition and is hardly noticeable in many cases. There is a great variety of colors and markings, each known by a special name, but black and white seem to predominate. There are said to be a few wild cattle, descendants of escapes, which are very shy and live in the heavy forest.

293 The cattle belonging to each village are herded together by boys, with, in the old days, a few armed men for protection. During the day they are allowed to graze anywhere on land that is lying fallow. At night they are driven into pens, which are now on the outskirts of the villages. In the old days the pens were often in the village and the cattle were driven within the stockade if an attack threatened.

● 417 The Menabe cattle pens are like large, roughly built houses with thatched roofs and open sides. Among the Ikongo, who live in less rainy territory, the pens are usually open. They are made from posts planted about 2 feet apart and laced together with withes or vines. Two posts, planted one behind the other, stand on each side of the entrance, which is closed by dropping long saplings in between them. Semi-subterranean pens of the plateau type are unknown among the Tanala. The pens are never cleaned and in some I saw the manure had accumulated to a depth of over 3 feet.

422 618 233 The Ikongo have a regular system of ownership marks, made by cutting one or both ears in various patterns. These marks are hereditary in lineages and there are sometimes stories to account for their origin. Families within the lineage usually have no individual marks. The Menabe rarely earmark their cattle, their herds being so small that ownership is never in question.

232 There is no attempt at systematic cattle breeding and it does not seem to have occurred to the natives that their herds could be improved in this way. One informant expressed surprise when I told him of our methods, then said that after all the matter took care of itself, for the best bull would defeat the others and take all the cows.

825 Young bulls are often castrated, but solely with the idea of improving the flesh. A Menabe informant said that two bulls in a herd must always be castrated at the same time, so that they could

1 [i.e., dogs - Analyst]

fastened together by bands of twined work, usually three rows wide. The twining material is unsplit *vahy* vine. The traps have a conical entrance way, made from pointed slips of bamboo. On one side there is an aperture opened and closed by sliding slips of bamboo into the first row of twining (Fig. 3, e, g).

The fish scoops are conical, 2 to 3 feet across the mouth and 3 to 5 feet long. They are made from long, slender, somewhat flexible splints taken from the midrib of the raffia palm. At intervals of 3 or 4 inches these are fastened together by single rows of twined raffia fiber running at right angles to their length. The mouth of the scoop is held open by a hoop of roughly plaited vines. When not in use, this hoop is removed and the scoop rolled up laterally (Fig. 3, a).

The hanging platforms are made with the same materials and technique as the scoops just described. They are rectangular, reinforced with splints of bamboo at the edge, and are used in household sacrifices and for smoking fish (Fig. 3, c).

The Tanala also make a few trays or baskets from sections of large pandanus leaves. The heavy midrib is pared thin and the ends and sides of the section bent upward. The ends are then folded and sewn together (Fig. 6, g). Small baskets of this type are sometimes made of the sheaths of the giant bamboo, which are similarly folded and sewn.

There seems to be little or no use of bark containers. Fish traps are sometimes made from rolls of bark held in position by bands of twisted vine (Fig. 3, f).

MANUFACTURE OF BARK CLOTH

The Tanala Menabe claim that in the earliest times their clothing was made exclusively of beaten bark, called *fanto*. They have now learned how to weave and with this and the introduction of European cloth *fanto* has become obsolete. I never saw it in use, but specimens were made for me by a few of the older men, who still remember the process.

Fanto is made from the bark of the *voara* tree. When a wide piece is desired, trees up to a foot in diameter are used. The hard outer bark is scraped away on the tree until the soft inner bark is exposed. This is then detached by ringing the tree above and below and making a single vertical cut. The bark is laid in the sun until nearly dry, then beaten. The beater (*odintana*) is shaped like a European mallet, with a head of hard wood and an inserted handle

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

342 peak of the roof and project about 3 feet above it. They are pointed, or carved into graceful curves, like horns. I never saw this among the Zafimaniry, but informants said it sometimes occurred. The points represent the horns of cattle, but none of my informants knew why they were used, or attached other than a decorative significance to them.

The standard house has eight windows, most of which are never opened. There are two in each wall, placed rather nearer the ends than the center. Some of the more recent houses depart from this plan, limiting the number to two or three. The main window, which is used for entrance, is near the southern end of the west wall. All the windows are usually of the same size and construction. They are square, about 2 feet 6 inches on a side, with a well-made frame and a solid wooden door turning on pin hinges. The sill is 2 feet 6 inches to 3 feet above ground. Stone pillars about 6 inches in diameter and 18 inches high, or sections of tree trunk, are planted just inside and outside the entrance window to serve as steps. These are called *tokonana*. The use of such a doorway requires a good deal of agility, but the natives say that the high sills serve to keep pigs, etc., out of the house and small children in. They also give the householder a great advantage in case of attack.

The windows open inward and are secured by heavy wooden bolts sliding under cleats. The southwestern window is provided with a crude sort of lock. The center of the bolt is cut into a series of squares with ridges between. In the jamb of the window, or sometimes in the shutter itself, there is a small hole. On leaving the house, the householder inserts a curved iron (Fig. 19, c) through this hole, catches its point on one of the ridges carved on the bolt, and slides the bolt home. Security during his absence is assured by varying the distance of the bolt from the hole, so that too long or too short a key will not work.

The northern half of the house is usually ceiled with transverse rafters. These rest on the top of the wall. Over the rafters bamboos are laid longitudinally. They are often covered with first a layer of grass and then a layer of clay, making a strong, smooth floor. The attic formed in this way is really a small room, high enough in the center for a man to stand erect. It is used for storage of all sorts, but never for sleeping. The attic is reached by a ladder made from a notched log (*tohatra*) or, less frequently, by notches cut in the center post of the house. The foot of the ladder is usually planted immediately in front of the entrance to the house.

[417]